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Centenary of the Independence
of Mexico.

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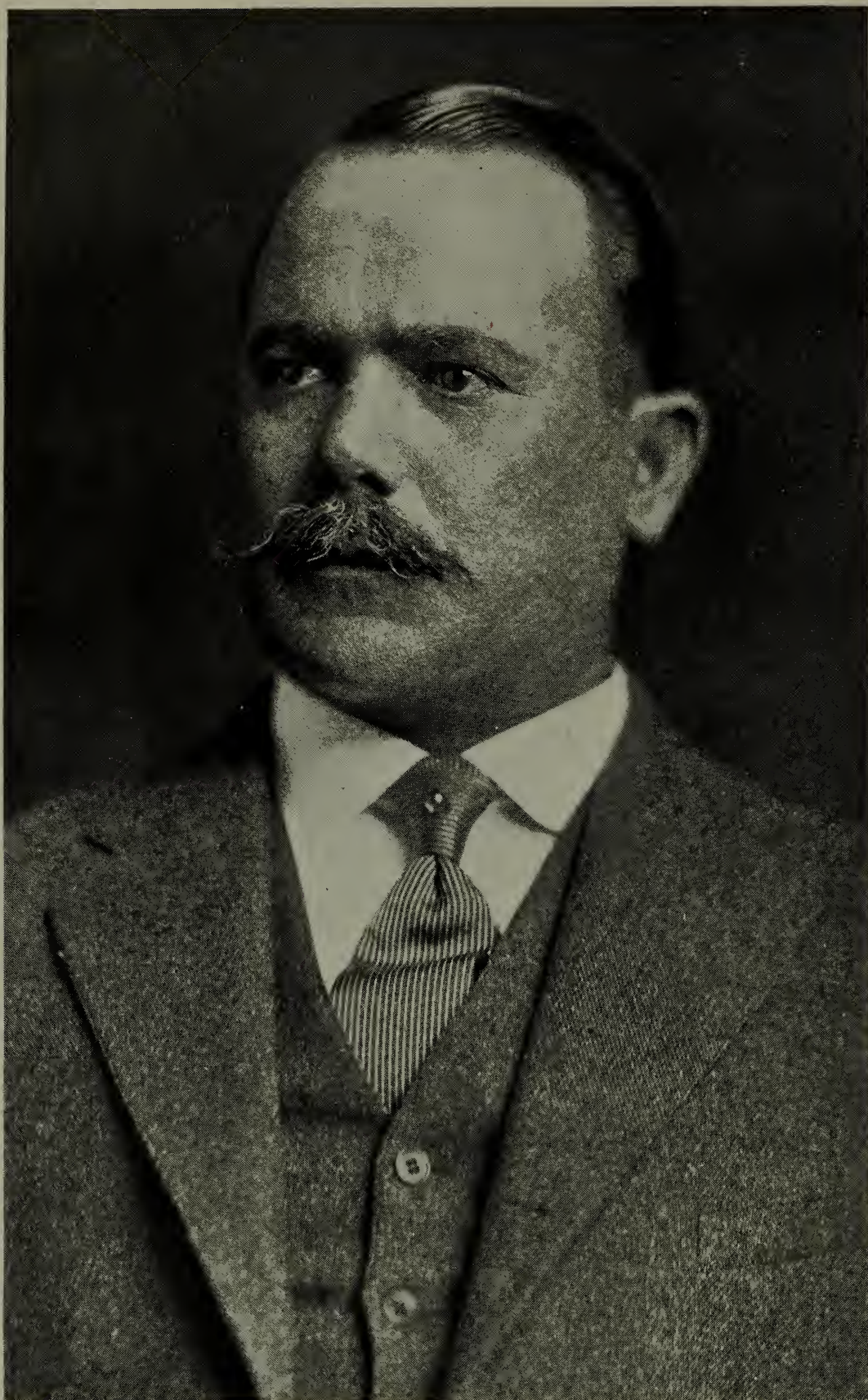
CENTENARY
OF THE
INDEPENDENCE OF MEXICO

(SEPT. 27, 1821-SEPT. 27, 1921)



PUBLISHED IN COMMEMORATION OF
THE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF
MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C.
1921



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THE SOUL OF MEXICO

By Dr. GUILLERMO A. SHERWELL,

Jurisconsult, the United States Section of the Interamerican High Commission.

"A brother hedged about by alien speech
And lacking all interpreter."

DIFFICULT, indeed, is it to portray the spirit of an entire people. When attempted by those who have taken part in its formation, it is forthwith endowed with all perfection, moved by all things noble, inspired by all that is heroic, capable of infinite sacrifice, beautiful with the measured rhythm of moral health and harmony. Let, however, the alien outsider try his hand and lo, through the prism of personal prejudice we behold either a travesty of spurious and false beauty, or a vague something bowed beneath the weight of an ethnological malediction. No one can boast of a disinterestedness so absolute, an aloofness of affection so complete, and a proximity so intimate, in the matter of observation, that his portrayal will be truthful and exact. But between the conscious or subconscious hostility of the outsider and the sympathy of the intimate or friend, the latter is to be preferred. And if the truth must be adulterated, may it be with the love which beautifies rather than the hatred which befouls and deforms!

The soul of Mexico! * * * How earnestly have I not sought its revelation! Alike in the child, the youth, and the man have I searched, through the long years in which I shared their life, communing with their thoughts, drinking from the same springs, yearning after the same ideals. In the widely separated social classes, even to the most secluded and hidden spiritual places among rich and poor, among the exalted and the lowly, the quest has led. And how that multiform soul has forever eluded my grasp! Even when I believed it surely in my hand, how it has slipped between my fingers, leaving at most, and rarely, an impression of the evanescent, an impression soft as far heard melody, as fleeting as the white wisp of cloud on the distant horizon, and as intangible as "the stuff of which dreams are made."

I have turned to the descriptions of others, but when the reading is done something within me protests and rebels, exclaiming "This is not the truth; the Mexican is not like this."

The Mexican can not be judged; he must, instead, be understood. Nations are not judged, nor are whole peoples absolved or condemned. Peoples and nations are understood or misunderstood; they are studied, and toward them is extended a friendly hand or upon them an unfriendly back is turned. But woe to the nation

which sets itself up as a judge of other nations, for with what measure it metes, it shall itself be meted! Never has mere greatness conferred immunity, and the punishment of the Only Judge fell alike upon Tyre as upon Carthage.

To understand the Mexican soul, one must relive, in thought, the life of that complex people, of that people which, with heavy pack on shoulders, gaze earthward fixed but mind Godward bent, forever moves onward, in a never-ending pilgrimage.

Poor pilgrim people! The Aztec began the centuries-long march in search of the land flowing with milk and honey. From the frozen deserts of the north, with his never tiring, never ceasing dog trot he came, guided by his priest and impelled by the legend which was to bring him to the place where the eagle would devour the snake. He reaches a fertile valley or a plain which promises easy subsistence, and there he stays for a year—or a century. There the fathers die, and the sons plow in the same furrow which their sires have turned or, they lift pack to shoulder and resume the interminable march through the pathless waste in search of the promised land. At times they find athwart their way new peoples, whose roots are already firmly embedded in the soil, and with whom they struggle in sanguinary battle until they vanquish, or are themselves vanquished. They learn new things and acquire new ways—here, a peculiar method and style of construction; there, the custom of sacrificing prisoners on the altars of cruel divinities. But always they must move on, ever southward, in search of the legendary eagle, the eagle which is to devour the serpent.

A people obedient to the priest and magistrate are they; a people of elementary virtues and of passions likewise elementary; a youthful people and, like youth, strong, upright, and innocent when they reach the valley of Anáhuac, where before long we find them firmly established and imposing their overlordship upon the neighboring nations, between whiles, as they build, legislate, rule, and dream.

They dream of the ancient legend which tells them that a day will come when their will must be submitted to another and more powerful will, a time when the “eagle-chieftains” and “tiger-chieftains” will be obliged to render tribute to the white men who, in the fullness of time, will appear from the east.

Meanwhile, the Aztec throne blazes with splendor, and on the cruel altars the red blood flows in streams. The multitude bow their foreheads to the earth before the God of War and their radiant sovereign; the hard-muscled arm launches the dart which pierces the enemy breast or, in single combat the battle is won, the life of the vanquished being spared so that later his palpitating heart may be offered to the cruel divinity.

Time passes, and the Aztec empire is a network of roads, over which its messengers travel with astonishing speed; stately palaces

and gardens shelter and delight the nobility; armed embarkations cross and recross Lake Texcoco or rock gently at their moorings in the canals of Xochimilco, beside the sensuous floating gardens.

And then, at last, come the whites who, aided by the legend and by their own genius, hasten to make alliances with which to subjugate the proudest of the indigenous nations. And the imperial splendors fade and disappear before their horror-stricken eyes, and the one-time proud vassals must now bend the knee before the power represented by the viceroy's pomp.



Photo by P. J. Clark

THE GREAT PYRAMID OF THE SUN AT SAN JUAN TEOTIHUACAN.

The waves of the lake are the same as before, but upon the cadenced murmur of Aztec lips is imposed the imperious mandate of the new Lord, the Son of Castile. The ancient gods have fallen from their altars into the dust, and upon the ruins of their temples are rising the majestic cathedrals in which a religion of peace and love is to offer a refuge to the helpless and distressed, consolation to the sorrowing, and light and hope to the disinherited. The floating gardens still flower fair, but instead of the chaste idyl of the golden-skinned maid and the bronze-muscled warrior there is the brutal violation of the lawless soldiery or the honorable union of Castilian sire and Indian mother—the marriage of two races whose children are the messengers of mystery and the heralds of future arcana.

New gods, new masters, a new morality; but in the depths, in the essence of his spirit, there is the same being who inclines his forehead

before a superior power, the same tireless trot in the same endless pilgrimage, the same resignation as of one who inherits the custom of following what is never reached, the same mystic cruelty which offers the insatiable deity the heart of others and even his own; and all this is continued in the blood of the subjugated indigenes and in the blood of the half breed whose formative period begins with the Spanish conquest.

This new stage lasts 300 years, during which the race is modified and institutions are established. The administrative forms of Spain are copied although in many cases, and particularly in that of municipal organization, the form only, the working reality being entirely different. The Spanish municipality is a democratic institution, the Spanish American municipality a feudal one. * * * In Spain the municipality is a bulwark in defense of the rights of the people, but in Spanish America its object is to defend the rights of the governing class. This is why from the beginning the wars for independence have not been democratic wars—that is to say, truly wars for independence. True democracy does not exist in the Spanish-American colonial period, when the conquistador alone possessed rights and privileges, many of which even to the American-born Spaniard were denied. The Indian is ever the minor, protected and cared for by some, exploited by others, illtreated by many, the object of the royal pity, and of the inexhaustible charity and affection of the missionaries; but never is he the citizen, never an equal among equals, except in that great democracy, the Christian Church, which recognizes not race, but men, which distinguishes neither master nor servant, but only free, immortal souls.

And so the Indian and the half breed, whose blood is wholly or in part that of their forefather pilgrims, move onward down the years and centuries, back still bent beneath the burden, humble forehead still inclined earthward, and mind fixed on God. But there is within them a vague feeling of offended justice, a mild indignation the exact nature of which they can not define, a feeling of rebellion, the inherent and mute protest of those whose lives are humiliation and suffering, who dream of better things in a future perhaps never to be realized.

During the 300 years of Spanish dominion in Mexico diverse tendencies appear, giving form and shape to what will, later, constitute a nation. The most widely separated indigenous tribes are subjugated by Spanish arms, some of them becoming the object of special attention on the part of the missionaries. Over vast territories a truly theocratic régime is established where, under the government of God represented by his priest, the peaceable Indian tills his fields and listens, enraptured, to the sweet story of the redemption of man. The self-denying Franciscan and the heroic Jesuit penetrate the most inaccessible mountain wilds in search of the savage and untractable ones, until they are rounded up in their



NATIONAL MONUMENT TO THE INDIAN HERO, CUAUTEMOC, IN WHICH HE IS SEEN AS THE CROWNING FIGURE.

Paseo de la Reforma, Mexico City.

own ravines where, not with the sword, but with the divine symbol of the cross, darkened mind and defiant heart are alike penetrated by the spirit of submission. In the Indian of this type fear is unknown, nor can his spirit be broken by intimidation. Only by kindness and love can he be dominated and led; and when, later, the influence of the missionary wanes, its place being taken by the law in the form of governmental oppression, it is from these Indians the *guerrilla* chiefs are recruited, it is among them the most formidable rebellions are planned, and the Yaqui and the Maya, like the South American Guaraní and Araucano, have known how to live primeval epics late into the nineteenth century. * * *

But the missionary is poor like his ward, the Indian, and like the latter he is humble, submitting himself to the superior power which orders and controls. For him the struggle is simple; having accepted sacrifice as the dominant note of his life work, he neither complains in martyrdom nor is unduly uplifted in his moments of triumph. There is no inequality of caste between him and the Indian as, together, they kneel to adore that God before whose approach all lesser and cruel divinities have fled; they are two brother souls which in the words of one common prayer and inspired by one common hope are together uplifted to the throne of a just God, who is no respecter of persons. And beside the poverty-stricken, barefoot Indian sits the missionary, equally poor and unshod, teaching with infinite patience the alphabet and the principles of religion. The church is one and the same for both; the same hard earth is too often their only bed; the same bread of parched corn is their daily sustenance; the much prized and all too scarce working tools included in the missionary's outfit are to be seen in the hands of the Indian as often as in those of the catechist; in the hour of death both receive the same sacraments, and each finds in the village cemetery his last resting place.

It is in the mining centers where human ambition, greed and avarice are unleashed and, like a pack of wolves, fall upon the treasure which will permit the ragged adventurer upon his return to the mother country to play the part of *el gran señor*. These colonies are established in the form of encampments, hence their qualification of *real*. From the beginning, mining takes first place, as its products materialize most rapidly and in the tangible form of the most tempting of all metals—the metal which purchases utilities and luxuries, which alike satisfies desire and hypercritical virtue. Silver was the source and creator of many a title and pedigree. “For what thou didst contribute”—so ran the royal pergamines—titles were conferred, and entailed estates established. Many a Spanish soldier who had followed the royal colors in the battle fields of Europe, and who came to America to better his fortune, halted in the *real* long enough to entirely refurbish his pedigree—which if not badly tar-

nished was surely mildewed—with that most excellent first aid to damaged honor—gold dust. There in the camp the indigenous race did not maintain itself in the same purity as in the mission centers. There the facile contact of the Spaniard with the Indian, servile by constant humiliation, favored the formation of the new race. In the camp, the religious spirit was represented by the church rather than the missionary, and into the church the fortunate miner poured his treasure in the form of elaborate altars and melodious chimes of bells which were truly silver tongued. Witness, ye churches of Taxco, of San Luis Potosí, and the many, many others whose towers like uplifted arms rise forever heavenward, imploring pardon and mercy for the ever-increasing sin and suffering; ye, who show forth in the foliage of arch and column, in the massive gold of thy retables, in thy paintings by master hands—miracles of color and inspirations of love; the golden notes which vibrate from thy belfry towers scatter abroad that strong, vital spirit, harsh but withal religious, of the Castilian, who whether full of pride and crime or an ensample of virtue and nobility of soul was ever full to repletion of pious zeal.

The Spaniard was not much given to agriculture. He, nevertheless, established immense grazing ranges in which cattle thrived greatly with small attention on the part of the owner, but under the constant vigilance of the Indian who under the trees in the wide pastures, sunkissed by day and, by night, under the friendly stars of the spacious firmament of the high plateau, found something akin to his old errant pilgrimage. Sometimes land was parcelled out for cultivation, but in each case it was the hands of the Indian which guided the plow and it was his sweat which enriched the soil. Long and difficult was his daily task, and in many cases so merciless his treatment, that the indignant compassion of the missionaries was stirred. Notable among those who raised voices of protest was the illustrious Bartolomé de las Casas, who demanded unceasingly that the condition of the Indian be bettered. * * * By this time the African element has reached the coast of Mexico, but it forms no appreciable part of the ethnic components which finally combine to constitute the nation. The Indians who were *encomendado*, or contracted, to some of the Spanish land and mine owners offer the most painful example of human suffering and degradation. On the other hand, not all the *encomenderos* were inhuman monsters, and more than a few times was the black misery of the oppressed sons of Anáhuac mitigated by flashes of human kindness and pity.

Meanwhile, centers of culture were gradually being evolved in the cities. The university makes its appearance in Spanish America long before it appears in the English colonies of America. The printing press flourishes and the sixteenth century witnesses in Mexico great activity in matters pertaining to the extension of knowledge. Certain literature, however, could not be imported, as



Photograph from W. P. Young, Progress, Mexico.

VIEW OF THE EAST FAÇADE OF THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE, IN THE RUINS OF UXMAL, YUCATAN.

This border zone, about 10 feet wide, is most handsomely and elaborately carved and adorned with twined fillet molding and ornate snouted masks. The broad space below is filled with bold fretwork, interrupted by the wonderful over-door trophy, the central feature of which is a life size human figure, sculptured in the round and seated in a niche with festooned base. The head was surmounted by an elaborate and colossal headdress, most of which remains.

the government was anxious to prevent the propagation of radical and disintegrating ideas, and the clergy, to prevent the diffusion of heresies which in their judgment would have plunged the minds of the newly converted into a chaos of doubt and confusion.

The viceroys were, on the whole, good and able men. For the most part they honestly tried to represent the Spanish monarch in a worthy and dignified manner. If they sinned, it was because of weakness or political necessity, rather than personal perversity. In any case, their influence could not extend to the distant provinces; but by means of the *audiencias* or tribunals, and magistracies, they endeavored to procure a good administration and to execute justice, so far as was possible in a time when hearts had to be indeed of iron to emerge triumphant from the daily struggle. From Mexico, embassies were sent to the Orient and Japan's first contact with white peoples was through Mexican missionaries.

The work of racial fusion slowly proceeded. Whether the Spanish erred in trying to civilize and assimilate the Indian, thus creating a new race and a new culture, instead of exterminating him, as did the English-speaking whites while transplanting to American soil the civilization of Europe, is a matter that must be decided not in accordance with the narrow views accorded a merely political undertaking, but with that breadth of vision and ample judgment demanded by the supreme good of humanity. If the Spanish *conquistador* did wrong in his attempt—however humanly imperfect—to respect, conserve, and protect a race, perhaps to the detriment of the perfect organization and easy functioning of institutions transplanted from Europe to benefit the whites, is history's to decide; but it may confidently be asserted that the Spanish *conquistador* can with erect head and unlowered front present himself before that tribunal pending its supreme decision. * * *

And the Indian, whether in his isolated valley where, poor in silver, he views with apprehension the steady encroachment of the white or, yonder in the broad upland ranches and in the mine, irredeemably bound to his white master, still follows the long trail of his unending pilgrimage, his back ever bowed beneath the burden, by his side the half-breed brother, his gaze still fixed on the miseries of life, his heart still mutely uplifted to God. And as he goes, in his breast smolders a nebulous rebellion, and with it all a vague aspiration of better things, to be realized in an always distant and deceptive future, a mirage, as it were, of hope as diaphanous as the wisp of cloud on the far horizon. * * *

The Indian adored God and venerated the king and his representatives. The European-born enjoyed all the privileges and immunities of his condition and counted securely on the loyalty of the Indian. The American-born white was, as it were, the conscience, the living witness of inherent rights and their enforced deprivation;

the personification of restless ambition toward what he believed was his; and the audacious embodiment of enlightened spirit and offended feeling; moreover, he is the man destined to achieve the independence of the nations in Hispanic America.

Reading, more or less well digested; the movement toward liberty on the part of the English-speaking colonies of America which was immediately imitated in both continents; the philosophical doctrines of the eighteenth century; the Utopias of dreamers who talked of social organizations created in the abstract by the imagination; all this fermented in the spirit of the American white, already ripe for rebellion, to the peril of ancient powers resolved at any cost to sustain themselves. The Indian, the legitimate owner of the soil, becomes the instrument in the hands of the contending parties. At first he upholds the high powers that be—God and the king—against the movement for freedom. In some cases it was the discipline of camp life and the depredations which generally accompany revolution which attracted him; in others, fewer, it was the dawning national conscience which began to make itself known; and in still other and greatly more numerous cases, it was the conviction that the war of independence was divinely approved, or that reparation was to be made to a dethroned monarch, which brought the Indian to serve in the insurgent files and to contribute his blood to the creation of new nations.

The masses of humanity which enriched with their blood the soil where bloomed the red flower of liberty, were always docile, easily influenced and submissive to superior authority. By tens of thousands the simple Indians flock to the standards of three parish priests—Hidalgo, Matamoros and Morelos who, on assuming the shoulder-strap did not thereby abandon the maniple or cease with anointed hands to bless their following hosts—because behind these priests the Indian saw the divinity who had shaped their destinies from the time of their priest kings to that of their priest warriors. An earthquake in Venezuela becomes the punishment of God, and produces greater dismay than a whole series of military disasters. The heroic but obstinate citizen of Pasto resisted Bolivar even to the point where the latter feared for his life, until his bishop is converted into a collaborator and chief. Excommunication can effect great things, until such time as the people comprehend that there are bishops in both armies, and that God does not take definite sides in the great contest.

During the long continued shock of war, in which the enemy is measured, the bandit converted into the soldier and the small chief into the general, the national conscience is being shaped in harsh lines by heavy hammering, so that when the struggle is ended and liberty won there remains, still, the work of finishing and perfecting.

A century has now passed since the colossal task was begun, and still it can not be called completed. Close scrutiny reveals the same superimposed layers in the body politic. The white achieved independence and, by the same stroke, the overlordship of the indigene who is still, as ever, the oppressed one, while the half-breed is the link which lives either like the Indian or in contact with the white, from whom he can scarcely be distinguished. And here and there arise, as glorious exceptions, unique bronze-skinned men, black-haired and black-eyed, who by sheer force of genius impose their will and become the directors of nations.

But in judging the soul of the nation it is not these exceptions who should be taken as the type. Not Iturbide the white, nor Juárez the Indian, nor even Porfirio Diaz the half-breed, represent or epitomize in themselves the soul of the Mexican people. It must be looked for in the activities of the masses, in their typical ways of living, in their aspirations and ideals; how the man of mixed blood lives must be seen; it must be known what part the white man plays in that great nation of fifteen millions of undying souls—that nation which the world views with wonder and amazement.

Because, rightly considered, the life of Mexico is amazing. The Indian, considered by many as a dead-weight which, as the convict his chain and ball, the nation must drag, an eternal impediment to liberty of action, is nevertheless an active element in the national life, a factor which in Mexico represents a wealth of virtues and which, because of indifference or a too facile agreement with pre-conceived theories, has never been recognized. The half-breed may perhaps to-day occupy the most prominent place in the national life, and the white stamp the seal of his refined culture on the nation's activities, thus keeping it in contact with European civilization. But the Indian, the constructor of pyramids and empires, whose spontaneity of spirit has been repressed for centuries, harbours a perfectly justifiable lack of confidence in the white who, lavish in promises when he has need of the Indian, is extremely forgetful of him when that need is past. But when the Indian becomes the director his work will be stamped with that same wealth of patience and devotion which he put into it when directed by others.

How shall that spirit, not so much asleep as suffocated by the weight of oppression, be roused? Where is the magic wand at whose touch the Indian will arise clothed in all those fundamental virtues which are inherently his and purged of those vices which have been his enslavement? When will the Indian stand erect in the full stature of manhood and, with arms uplifted, chant, not as of old monotonous hymns to the rising sun, but the vibrant paeon of his soul's independence; when, in unison with other souls as independent as his, will he realize the grandeur of their common task, the welding of a nation? In other words, what must be done to make the Indian



Courtesy of Rodrigo Sánchez, Tampico, Mexico

MEXICO CITY: EXAMPLES OF MODERN PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

Upper: Plaza and the cathedral. To the right is the National Palace. Lower: The School of Mines at the left, and the Department of Communications and Public Works at the right.

the active force he should be and not what he has been compelled to be—an involuntary opposition. It would be madness to hope to answer this question in such fashion that all would agree, but as to some parts of that answer there can be no dissenting voice.

The Mexican Indian needs education, and by education is not meant schools merely, for the school itself may be perverted into an instrument of oppression and a deadening of the spirit. What the Indian needs is an education which will teach him to respect himself, physically, intellectually, and morally, and which will provide the means for the harmonious development of these three phases of his being. His life needs to be lifted to a higher level; his ambition roused to the point where he will crave greater ease and comfort than he now enjoys; he needs better remuneration for his work and to be taught not to waste that remuneration in gambling nor to permit it to be discounted in a peonage which reduces him to positive slavery. The Indian was always agricultural, and still is, essentially. His early love for the soil, long weakened and deadened, must be revived and sufficient land given him on which to raise his daily bread. He must be taught to live hygienically, his family ties must be strengthened, and the old-style Mexican *leva* destroyed, that special form of conscription which reduces women to hiding their husbands, the unmarried youth to take to the hills like wild beasts, and a whole people to view the government, not as their servitor and helper, but as the master who terrorizes, the lash of an insatiable Moloch, the Huitztopochtli who still subsists and whose food is quivering human flesh.

The Indian must be educated in the practises of good citizenship; be brought to understand the elementary problems of government in his parish, village, and municipality; later, given some comprehension of the mechanism of national government and to realize that his vote as citizen has a power which far surpasses that of the revolutionary musket and gun. Schools must be established everywhere, so that no child shall lack a place where he may learn all that which no citizen can afford to miss; all those imitations of alien ways which can in Mexico strike no abiding root must be put to one side. Many there are, however, who still believe that miracles can be performed by the use of artificial and exotic remedies.

The Mexican school was in the beginning the old-time school of Spain and it produced great men and enormous masses of the ignorant. It then found inspiration in the English system only to produce the same results. Later still France and things French had the place of honor, but Mexico continued to produce great men and enormous masses of the ignorant. To-day the new magic wand hails from the United States in the form of American organization, American curriculums, and American text-books. But neither will these perform the miracle so ardently desired. Whether Spanish, French, Lancasterian, or Yankee is of no impor-

tance. What does matter is that there should be schools, and ever more schools; buildings which are palaces in the capital cities where the children gaze wide eyed on the beauties of gilded and vaulted ceiling, simple white-washed class rooms in the small towns, the small cabin in the remote village, the leafy verdure of the spreading trees at the tropical cross roads; rich or poor, exalted or humble, but *schools*, many schools, and ever more schools; and teachers, a multitude of teachers who, while imparting a knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, will also implant a knowledge of the *patria* in which Mexicans live and which is their precious heritage; and that this be done at once, without delay; that no more weary years be spent in the meticulous consideration of plans and projects involving great organizations, for the matter is of immediate urgency; it brooks of no delay.

Nor should this work begin from above, but from the lowest foundation level. "If thou knowest aught, teach it," should be the motto for the spread of the new gospel which, if obeyed, will bring to pass in Mexico a new Pentecost, when with tongues "as of fire" and as "of a mighty rushing wind" mouths shall be opened and lips unsealed to speak to all the disinherited a message of love, of equality, and of redemption.

If the Mexican Indian had not been essentially good and innocent, he had not been so easily the victim of the white during the long centuries. But already the latter begins to realize that the day is past when he can dream of being the lord of Indian life, property, and honor; he begins now to perceive the need of cooperation if he would not precipitate a catastrophe in which he would be the first to perish. * * * Let the European white bring an open mind to those currents which set futureward, and a spirit ready to respond to all those unquiet influences which make up the great propulsive force of the world to-day. Let the Indian bring his steady constancy, that tireless dog trot of the errant pilgrim which covers leagues and leagues without stop or rest; that gaze earthward bent which reminds that we are dust, and that spirit fixed on high to remember that resignation is virtue but self-contempt a crime, and that there is One above who neither slumbers nor sleeps. Let the mestizo combine in his spirit the best qualities of the two races, softening the abrupt contrasts and, brother to both, work out in his own being the destiny appointed by the just God of nations. And in this fusion will be accomplished the miracle which still remains to be wrought.

Meanwhile, in spite of the imperfect fusion of races, the sharp distinction of classes which has existed, and the lack of proportion between the different social strata in culture and the essentials of daily living, Mexico has achieved during her century of independence amazing results. The treacherous sands of open roadsteads have

been converted into harbours where the ships of many nations ride safely at anchor; the force of flood and cascade has been harnessed to the wheels of peaceful labor; a network of steel rails is slowly but surely binding the uttermost parts of the nation together; pest-holes, spreading disease and death broadcast, have become model towns to be imitated by other nations; epidemics have been combated with an energy and such success as to evoke the commendation of the sanitary authorities of the United States, who pride themselves on being the foremost in the world; the great and almost sacred metropolis, the center of the national government and affection, has been drained by a system of great tunnels; palaces have been constructed hardly less imposing than the ancient pyramids. And in the century of independence now being celebrated, Mexico has known how to repel the invader and, in the struggle with the foreign host, to overcome or, under the stress of superior force, to fall with honor on the field of battle. Mexico, moreover, has known how to raise, in sanguinary revolution, the banner of redeeming principles, to weld the national spirit in the cleansing fire of national disaster, under the crushing blows of misery, suffering, and austere privation and, in the fullness of time, to lay aside the warrior's insignia and take up the work of administration. And, finally, after half a century of cruel struggle she was able to give herself thirty years of peace, during which her national credit exceeded, or at least equalled, that of the most highly considered nations of the world, and when her name was always pronounced with respect. * * *

Pilgrim Mexico! As ever, thy pilgrim soul moves on over the rough precipitous road. May God guide thee and bring thee at last to the end of thy long, long journey, to take thine appointed place in the great concert of nations! May the eagle at last devour the serpent!



SIGNIFICANT DATES IN MEXICAN HISTORY

September 16, 1810, Hidalgo proclaims the independence of Mexico in the town of Dolores.

December 6, 1810, Hidalgo abolishes slavery in Mexico.

July 29, 1811, execution of Hidalgo in Chihuahua.

September 14, 1813, organization of the first Mexican Congress.

October 22, 1813, adoption of the first Mexican Constitution.

February 24, 1821, proclamation of "The Plan of Iguala," by which Augustín de Iturbide and Vicente Guerrero united forces against the Spanish régime.

September 27, 1821, the Army of Independence, commanded by Iturbide, makes its triumphal entrance into Mexico City.

July 22, 1822, Iturbide is crowned Emperor.

December 6, 1822, Antonio López de Santa Ana proclaims Mexico a Republic.

March 20, 1823, abdication of Iturbide.

October 10, 1824, Guadalupe Victoria inaugurated first President of the Mexican Republic.

February 5, 1857, the Federal Constitution is proclaimed.

June 12, 1864, Maximilian of Hapsburg is proclaimed Emperor.

February 5, 1917, new Constitution is proclaimed in Querétaro.

PRESIDENTS OF MEXICO

1824-1921.

Guadalupe Victoria.....	1824	Ignacio Comonfort.....	1855
Vicente Guerrero.....	1829	Benito Juárez.....	1858
Anastasio Bustamante.....	1830	(Empire, 1864-1867)	
Antonio López de Santa Ana.	1833	Benito Juárez.....	1867
Anastasio Bustamante.....	1837	Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada....	1872
Antonio López de Santa Ana..	1841	Porfirio Díaz.....	1876
José Joaquín de Herrera.....	1845	Manuel González.....	1880
Antonio López de Santa Ana..	1846	Porfirio Díaz.....	1884
Jose Joaquín de Herrera.....	1848	Francisco I. Madero.....	1911
Mariano Arista.....	1851	Victoriano Huerta.....	1913
Antonio López de Santa Ana..	1853	Venustiano Carranza.....	1914
		Alvaro Obregón.....	1920

MEXICO IN BRIEF

Area, 767,168 square miles.

Population, 17,000,000 (estimated).

Capital, Mexico City; population, 800,000.

The Climate, owing to the varying altitudes, as well as the country's situation, partly in the tropical and partly in the temperate zones, is greatly diversified.

Principal Exports.—Mineral—oil, silver, copper, lead, antimony, zinc, and gold; Vegetable—henequen, coffee, rubber (including guayule), chicle, frijoles, chick peas (garbanzos), ixtle, cabinet woods, zaceton root, tobacco, vanilla, cotton seed, and sugar; Animal—cattle, hides, skins, and tallow.

Principal Imports.—Machinery, tools, hardware, automobiles, cars, textiles and clothing, cotton, lumber, coal, vegetable oils, coke, liquors, grain, drugs, and furniture.

Chief Physical Characteristics.—Two mountain chains traverse the entire Republic, forming between them a number of valleys and plateaus of various altitudes. The plateau of Anáhuac, on which is situated the capital, is the largest and most important.

Means of Approach.—Mexico has a coast of some 4,574 miles on the Pacific and 1,727 miles on the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. There are 10 major ports on the Gulf coast and 13 on the Pacific, the former having steamship connections direct to the United States, Canada, and Europe; the latter to Japan and China, the west coast ports of the United States and Canada. By rail through connections between the roads of the United States and Mexico may be made at 5 points on the border, viz., Nogales, Piedras Negras, Ciudad Juárez, Laredo, and Matamoros. From the Guatemalan frontier through railway service to Veracruz and Mexico City has been completed.

THE PAN AMERICAN UNION is the international organization and office maintained in Washington, D. C., by the twenty-one American republics, as follows: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Salvador, United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela. It is devoted to the development of commerce, friendly intercourse, good understanding, and the preservation of peace among these countries. It is supported by quotas contributed by each country, based upon their population. Its affairs are administered by a Director General and Assistant Director, elected by and responsible to a Governing Board, which is composed of the Secretary of State of the United States and the diplomatic representatives in Washington of the other American governments. These two executive officers are assisted by a staff of international experts, statisticians, commercial specialists, editors, translators, compilers, librarians, clerks, and stenographers. The Union publishes a Monthly Bulletin in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, which is a careful record of Pan American progress. It also publishes numerous special reports and descriptive pamphlets on various Pan American subjects of practical information. Its library, the Columbus Memorial Library, contains 50,000 volumes, 175,000 index cards, and a large collection of maps. There is also a collection of 25,000 photographs, lantern slides, and negatives. The Union is housed in a beautiful building erected through the munificence of Andrew Carnegie and the contributions of the American Republics.

